Perceived Corporate Ethics and Individual Ethical Decision Making: When in Rome, Doing as the Romans Do

Sean Valentine
University of North Dakota

Lynn Godkin
Lamar University

John Vitton
University of North Dakota

The purpose of this study was to explore the degree to which beliefs about corporate ethics are positively related to ethical decision making, operationalized as ethical issue recognition, ethical judgment, and ethical intention. Using a self-report survey containing different ethics measures, information was collected from over 200 individuals employed in different organizations located the south central United States. The findings indicated that perceptions of corporate ethical values were positively related to the different steps of individual ethical reasoning, and that these steps were positively interrelated. Company leaders should develop organizational ethics to prompt ethical reasoning in employees.

INTRODUCTION

Since the earliest commercial trading, ethics has been a key challenge in business. Throughout history, ethical scandals have been commonplace, including the South Sea Bubble of the 18th century, the Yazoo land scheme of 1776, the initial Ponzi scheme that occurred in the 1920s, and the British victory bonds that defrauded individuals following World War I (Owen, 2010). However, it appears that many more ethical infractions have been reported in recent years, particularly in the United States. For instance, organizations such as Adelphia, Arthur Anderson, HealthSouth, ImClone Systems, Merrill Lynch, Tyco, and WorldCom have been involved in ethical scandals, with some of their top leaders facing criminal charges, job loss, and prison time (A Guide to Corporate Scandals, www.msnbc.com/news/corpscandal; Dess et al., 2010; Lavelle, 2002; Owen, 2010; Pearce & Robinson, 2009; Thompson et al., 2010, Trevino & Nelson, 2007). Other recent examples of business impropriety include Bernie Madoff's use of an illicit Ponzi financial scheme, which took $50 billion in charity and retirement contributions from individuals before going defunct in 2008 (Dess et al., 2010), and the U.S., German, and Russian investigation of Hewlett-Packard's alleged use of multi-million-dollar bribes to gain access to the Russian market to sell computer products (Crawford & Searcy, 2010). Perhaps the most widely publicized scandal of the past decade involved Enron, a company that was originally admired for its business practices. In reality, the company was misrepresenting its financial position, which resulted in a large-scale bankruptcy, a $64 billion deficit to investors, and a loss of workers' retirement funds (Thompson et al., 2010).

A common underlying theme in these scandals is the lack of a positive organizational culture and leadership that promotes ethics to employees. For instance, a study of 141 top financial professionals indicated that 17% of individuals had their CEOs, over a span of five years, request that they distort company financial information, and 5% had evidently complied (Roman, 2002; Wheelen & Hunger, 2008). A different study found that 53% of individuals working for a variety of firms indicated that they would falsify financial figures if someone in charge encouraged them (Kurlantzick, 2003; Wheelen & Hunger, 2008). The institutionalization of unethical norms is demonstrated particularly in the collective actions of employees. For instance, an investigation "by the Ethics Resource Center of 1,324 employees of 747 US companies found that 48% of employees surveyed said that they had engaged in one or more unethical and/or illegal actions during the past year. The most common questionable behaviors involved cutting corners on quality (16%), covering up incidents (14%), abusing or lying about sick days (11%), and lying to or deceiving customers (9%). Some 56% of workers reported pressure to act unethically or illegally on the job" (Nearly Half of Workers…, 1997, p. 18B; Wheelen & Hunger, 2008, pp. 61-62).

Given the frequency and severity of poor work attitudes and conduct, encouraging employees to connect more positively to the work environment is viewed as a paramount issue, not only from a compliance standpoint, but also from a position of business sustainability. An ethical orientation indeed presents many advantages to professions and organizations, including increased organizational effectiveness, numerous beneficial employee attitudes, and other positive work responses (e.g., Carlson & Perrewe, 1995; Dess et al., 2010; Hunt et al., 1989; Trevino et al., 1998; Valentine & Fleischman, 2008; Valentine et al., 2011). As such, organizations are focusing more readily on corporate governance as a mechanism for managing generalized business and employee ethics:

> As the list as the list of companies engulfed in scandal grows—form Enron to Tyco to WorldCom—the revolution is gaining momentum. Top executives who once blithely ignored criticism of their clubby boards are scrambling to institute reforms. Directors whose main contribution to boardroom debate had been golf scores and gossips are returning to the classroom to learn how to read a balance sheet. Compensation committees that routinely awarded massive pay packages to poorly performing CEOs are having second thoughts. And while many official reforms have already been passed following Enron's meltdown, boards are going even further, instituting sweeping changes in their composition, structure, and practices on a scale not seen since skyrocketing executive pay gave birth to the modern governance movement in the 1980s (Lavelle, 2002, p. 245).

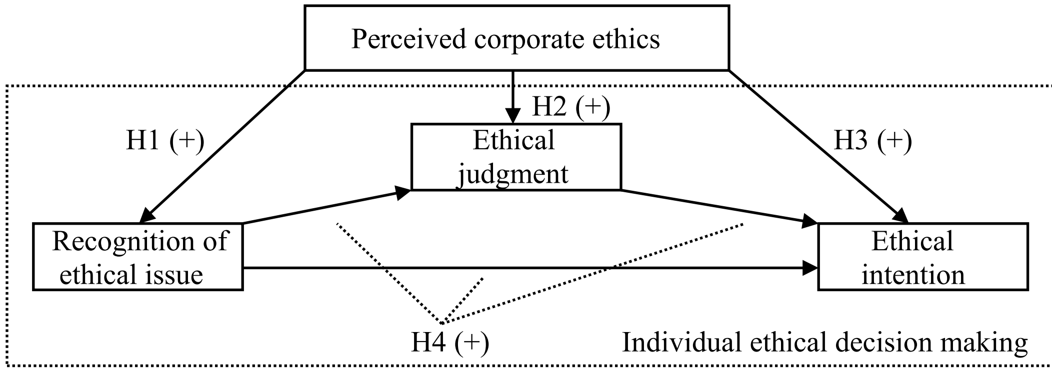
Organizations are also interested in developing a work context that encourages employees to perform ethically. Such an environment relies on the ethical position of leaders, the company's written or espoused values, and other positive behavioral norms (Hunt et al., 1989; Trevino et al., 1998; Trevino & Nelson, 2007) and is triggered through several complementary processes.

Some of these processes include the immediate ethical climate (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Victor & Cullen, 1988) and organizational ethical culture (Treviño, 1986; Treviño & Youngblood, 1990), which underscore the important components of ethical context (e.g., Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Valentine & Fleishman, 2008). Ethical climate consists of the "…group of prescriptive climates reflecting the organizational procedures, policies, and practices with moral consequences" (Martin & Cullen, 2006, p. 177), and conduct results from individuals' beliefs about the expectations embodied in behavioral norms and standards (e.g., Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Martin & Cullen, 2006; Wimbush & Shepard, 1994). For instance, an egositic environment (Victor & Cullen, 1988) that promulgates self-interest among employees is known to increase unethical decision making and behavior (Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Peterson, 2002; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). "However, the reverse relationship is found where there is a climate that focuses employees' attention on the well-being of multiple stakeholders, such as employees, customers, and the community (benevolent climate), or on following rules that protect the company and others (principled climate)" (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010, p. 21). A company's ethical culture can also influence employee behavior (e.g., Treviño et al., 1998; Treviño & Youngblood, 1990), particulalrly individuals who score modestly in moral development (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Treviño, 1986). Whereas ethical climate is based on broadly-defined principles characterizing the work environment, ethical culture relies on more focused corporate approaches and policies that encourage ethical conduct (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Trevino et al., 1998), factors that include reprimanding unethical behaviors, supporting ethical acts, and staffing the firm with ethical leaders (Hunt et al., 1989; Trevino et al., 1998). On the contrary, when "…ethical culture systems such as leadership, norms, and reward policies encourage the achievement of bottom-line goals only, with no attention to ethical concerns, the culture is more likely to support unethical conduct" (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010, p. 7).

There is growing evidence that suggests corporate ethics, spearheaded by the approaches already outlined, leads to increased ethical decision making and fewer problems (e.g., Bartels et al., 1998; Sims & Keon, 1999). Ethical decision making in business is a psychological and behavioral process that involves an employees' cognitive reaction to an ethical problem experienced in the workplace, a process comprised of four progressive stages that include 1) recognizing an ethical issue, 2) making an ethical judgment in response to the issue, 3) establishing ethical intentions, and 4) behaving in an ethical manner (Jones, 1991; Reidenbach & Robin, 1990; Rest, 1986). Based on key ethics models (see Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Hunt & Vitell, 1986; Jones, 1991; Rest, 1986; Trevino, 1986; Wotruba, 1990), the theory of planned behavior, which indicates that behavioral intentions are a function of conduct norms and attitudes (Ajzen, 1991), and social learning that occurs during reinforcement processes and interactions with referent others (Trevino, 1986; Trevino & Nelson, 2007), individuals are likely to act ethically when their work environment is ethical. Previous empirical work indeed shows that ethical context, as well as the ethics programs that support such cultures, are associated with increased ethical issue recognition (Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Singhapakdi, 1993; Singhapakdi & Vitell, 1991), ethical judgment (Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Douglas et al., 2001; Nwachukwu & Vitell, 1997; Valentine & Barnett, 2007), ethical intention (Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Gephart et al., 2010; Valentine & Barnett, 2007), and ethical behavior (Gephart et al., 2010; Wimbush et al., 1997). Studies also indicate that the ethical decision-making steps are positively interrelated (Barnett, 2001; Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Fleischman et al., 2007; Valentine & Barnett, 2007). Consequently, there is reason to believe that employees' perceptions of ethical values should consistently enhance their ethical decision making when problems are experienced. A summary of these relationships is provided in Figure 1, and the following hypotheses are presented:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived corporate ethics is positively related to an individual's recognition of an ethical issue.
Hypothesis 2: Perceived corporate ethics is positively related to an individual's ethical judgment.
Hypothesis 3: Perceived corporate ethics is positively related to an individual's ethical intention.
Hypothesis 4: An individual's recognition of an ethical issue, ethical judgment, and ethical intention are positively interrelated.

FIGURE 1
SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIPS



This investigation is important because the results could help leaders more effectively develop a context that encourages appropriate social learning and conduct. In addition, the results should ideally support the notion that corporate ethics leads to ethical reasoning, which is particularly important given that previous research has been mixed (Loe et al., 2000; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005), with some work indicating that ethical context is unrelated to the ethical decision-making process, particularly when other variables are considered (e.g., DeConinck & Lewis, 1997; Paolillo & Vitell, 2002). Finally, this study evaluated three of the four steps of ethical reasoning to provide a more complete picture of the ethical context-ethical reasoning linkage, and a diverse professional sample was utilized to test the hypothesized relationships so that the findings could be generalized to many other occupational groups.

METHOD

Data Collection

Data was collected from a convenience sample of sales and business professionals employed at different organizations located the south-central region of the United States. Subjects were provided the survey, and some were given extras to distribute to colleagues. Completed surveys were collected either directly from the subjects or through other coordinating individuals. These procedures resulted in a convenience sample of 210 surveys, many of which were completed by individuals involved in sales activities. Slightly over 23% of subjects were sales/marketing managers, 25.2% were sales representatives, 1.5% were vice-presidents of sales/marketing, 30.7% had one of several "other" jobs, 17 of which were sales-based in scope (i.e., written titles included "sales clerk," "restaurant server/bartender," "real estate agent," "cashier," "outside sales," "floor sales," " sales associate," and "marketing rep"), and 4.5% specified multiple job types with one or more being sales-based. Over 10% of subjects were general managers, 1.5% each were accounting and human resource management professionals, and .5% each were presidents, treasurer/financial professionals, and MIS professionals.

Over 52% of the sample members were women, and 64.1% were white, 21.1% were black, 56.7% were single, and 36.1% were married. Subjects' average age was 31.34 years, and 62.1% had a high school diploma, 10.7% had an associate's degree, and 20.9% had a bachelor's degree. With regard to professional characteristics, 34.7% were supervisors, 79.6% had their companies share an ethics code that governed work conduct, and average position tenure and organizational tenure were 4.47 and 4.50 respectively. Finally, subjects had been provided an average of 8.30 hours of ethics training by their organizations in the last year, and an average of 27.89 hours since being hired.

Measures

This study utilized measures developed previously in other investigations of business ethics. In addition, an ethics vignette was used to facilitate the evaluation of the individual ethical decision-making process. These ethics measures and the scenario are presented in the Appendix.

Perceptions of corporate ethics were evaluated with a five-item scale developed by Hunt et al. (1989). This "corporate ethical values" measure has been used in past research with great success (e.g., Baker et al., 2006; Douglas et al., 2001; Paolillo & Vitell, 2002; Singhapakdi et al., 1999). Items were evaluated using a seven-point scale anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree), and higher averaged values showed increased perceptions of ethical values. The scale's coefficient alpha was .76.

An ethical vignette was used with several scales to evaluate the ethical decision-making process, a procedure utilized in many other studies of ethical reasoning (e.g., Barnett & Vaicys, 2000; LaFleur et al., 1996; Reidenbach & Robin, 1990; Sims & Keon, 1999; Singhapakdi et al., 1996; 1999). The vignette, which was adapted from Dabholkar and Kellaris (1992), required subjects to evaluate the action of purchasing more expensive business tickets from one airline to receive personal frequent flyer miles, instead of purchasing tickets from another airline that provides cheaper rates to the employer. Recognition of an ethical issue was measured with one item that asked respondents to indicate if the vignette contained an ethical problem (Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Fleischman et al., 2007; Valentine & Barnett, 2007). Opinions were disclosed on a six-point semantic differential scale with higher scores indicating increased ethical issue awareness. Ethical judgment was evaluated with four six-point semantic differential scales items that assess "moral equity" (Reidenbach & Robin, 1990), and after averaging item values, higher scores indicated an increased judgment that the behavior described in the vignette was unethical. The coefficient alpha of this measure was .93. Finally, ethical intention was measured with four six-point semantic differential scales (e.g., Barnett & Valentine, 2004; Fleischman et al., 2007; Valentine & Barnett, 2007), and after reverse coding two items and averaging values, higher scores showed an increased intention not to act in a questionable manner. This measure had a coefficient alpha of .89.

A number of control variables were included in the analysis to evaluate the impact of individual and organizational characteristics. Sex (1 = male, 2 = female), education (1= high school diploma, 2 = Associate degree, 3 = Bachelors degree, 4 = Masters degree, 5 = Doctoral degree, 6 = Law degree (JD), 7 = Medical degree (MD), 8 = Other ______), supervisor status (1 = no, 2 = yes), and job tenure (in years) were specified as individual controls, and ethics training provided since being hired (in hours) and a sharing an ethics code (1 = no, 2 = yes) were specified as organizational controls. A 10-item social desirability scale (see Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Fischer & Fick, 1993; Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972) was also used to account for subjects' impression management on the survey (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). Sample items from this scale include "I never resent being asked to return a favor" and "I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own." Items were rated on a two-point scale comprised of 1 (False) and 2 (True), and after coding five statements in reverse, item scores were added together so that higher scores (range of 10 to 20) indicated increased social desirability.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics and correlations were evaluated to determine the relative magnitude of the focal variables, as well as the relationships among these factors. Multiple hierarchical regression models were then used to test the study's hypotheses. The control variables were entered into the models first, followed by the different steps of ethical reasoning and corporate ethical values.

RESULTS

Variable Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

The mean scores for recognition of an ethical issue (M = 3.97, SD = 1.92), ethical judgment (M = 3.90, SD = 1.64), and ethical intention (M = 4.23, SD = 1.55) suggested that subjects responded to the problem in a moderately ethical manner. The mean score for corporate ethical values (M = 5.03, SD = 1.28) indicated that subjects believed that their organizations were relatively ethical. Finally, the mean score for social desirability (*M* = 16.05, *SD* = 2.12) implied that subjects' impression management was modest. Examination of the bivariate correlations among the demographic variables indicated that being female was negatively related to supervisor status (r = -.16, p < .05), and that being a supervisor was positively related to hours of ethics training (r = .17, p < .05) and perceived corporate ethical values (r = .17, p < .05). Position tenure was also positively related to ethical judgment (r = .16, p < .05) and ethical intention (r = .24, p < .01). With regard to the focal variables, perceived ethical values were positively related to recognition of an ethical issue (r = .29, p < .001), ethical judgment (r = .29, p < .001), and ethical intention (r = .33, p < .001). These findings suggest that corporate ethics is a key lever for increasing ethical decision making. Recognition of an ethical issue, ethical judgment, and ethical intention were positively interrelated (r = .39 to .57, p < .001), which provides additional empirical support for the multi-stage ethical decision-making model (Jones, 1991; Rest, 1986). Social desirability was positively related to position tenure (r = .15, p < .05), ethical judgment (r = .17, p < .05), and ethical intention (r = .29, p < .001), so the measure was included as a control in the hierarchical regression analysis.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Table 1 provides a summary of the hierarchical regression analysis. The control variables were entered into the first regression model, which did not result in a significant change in R-square. The corporate ethical values variable was entered into the model next, which resulted in a significant change in R-square, and perceived ethical values were associated with increased recognition of an ethical issue. The control variables were entered into the second regression model, which once again did not result in a significant change in R-square. Recognition of an ethical issue was entered into the model next, resulting in a significant change in R-square, and the variable was associated with increased ethical judgment. Finally, corporate ethical values was entered into the model, which caused a significant R-square change, and perceived ethical values were associated with increased ethical judgment. The control variables were entered into the third regression model, which caused a significant change in R-square. Position tenure and social desirability were positively related to ethical intention. Recognition of an ethical issue was entered into the model, which caused a significant R-square change, and the variable was associated with increased ethical intention. Ethical judgment was then entered into the model, resulting in a significant change in R-square, and judgment was associated with increased ethical intention. While not shown in Table 1, recognition of an ethical issue was not related to ethical intention in the presence of ethical judgment, indicating that the relationship between recognition and intention was fully mediated by judgment. Finally, including corporate ethical values caused a significant change in R-square, and ethical values were associated with increased ethical intention. These findings supported Hypotheses 1-4.

TABLE 1
RESULTS OF HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Dependent variable Independent variable(s)		Recognition of ethical issue β		Ethical judgment β		Ethical intention β	
Sex [a]		-.11		-.01		.01	
Education [b]		.02		.04		.00	
Supervisor [c]		-.06		-.09		.07	
Position tenure [d]		.11		.15		.19	*
Ethics training [e]		.07		-.02		.04	
Shared ethics code [c]		.12		.06		-.04	
Social desirability		.09		.16		.26	**
	Step 1 ΔR^2	.06		.06		.13	**
Corporate ethical values		.27	**				
Recognition of ethical issue				.50	***	.36	***
	Step 2 ΔR^2	.07	**	.23	***	.12	***
Corporate ethical values				.17	*		
Ethical judgment						.48	***
	Step 3 ΔR^2			.02	*	.16	***
Corporate ethical values						.14	*
	Step 4 ΔR^2					.02	*
Model *F*		2.61	*	7.43	***	10.90	***
Adjusted R^2		.08		.27		.39	
N		155		155		155	

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; [a] 1 = male, 2 = female; [b] 1= high school diploma, 2 = Associate degree, 3 = Bachelors degree, 4 = Masters degree, 5 = Doctoral degree, 6 = Law degree (JD), 7 = Medical degree (MD), 8 = Other ______; [c] 1 = no, 2 = yes; [d] In years; [e] In hours.

DISCUSSION

The results indicated that perceived corporate ethics was positively related to individual ethical decision making. More specifically, after controlling for the effects of different individual and organizational factors, perceived ethical values were associated with increased recognition of an ethical issue, ethical judgment, and ethical intention. Given the presence and magnitude of these relationships, businesses need to concentrate on building corporate ethics as a key mechanism for enhancing the individual ethical decision-making process, a reaffirmation that organizations should be proactive (rather than reactive) in the management of ethics. In addition, the steps of the ethical decision-making process were positively interrelated, which provides further support for the notion that the different stages increase subsequent steps of reasoning (Rest, 1986). These results and insights generate several noteworthy managerial implications.

In an effort to encourage ethical reasoning among employees, organizations should focus on building the workplace characteristics that are known to enhance corporate ethics. For instance, a concerted effort should be made to identify and promote managers who advance the ethical values of the firm (Ferrell et al., 1998; Hunt et al., 1989; Trevino, 1986; Trevino et al., 1998). Raytheon's former head, Dan Burnham, indeed proclaimed that "What do we look for in a leadership candidate with respect to integrity? What we're really looking for are people who have developed an inner gyroscope of ethical principles" (Dess et al., 2010, p. 414), and using information compiled from the 2002 Study of the Changing Workforce, Prottas (2008) found that the management integrity did positively influence many important work outcomes such as satisfaction, stress, and absenteeism. Leadership should also consistently reward ethical acts and admonish inappropriate conduct to encourage desirable workplace behaviors to reinforce positive business values (Ferrell et al., 2008; Trevino & Nelson, 2007; Trevino & Youngblood, 1900).

Other practical examples demonstrate the importance of ethical leadership. General Electric CEO Jack Welch and his replacement Jeffrey Immelt developed an organizational environment based on ethical values, and managers are expected to embody these principles. "Jeffery Immelt begins and ends each annual meeting of the company's 220 officers and 600 senior managers with a recitation of the company's fundamental ethical principles. Immelt and GE's other managers are careful to not violate these principles themselves or give implied consent for others to skirt these principles…" (Heineman, 2007; Thompson et al., 2010, p. 311). Many firms also employ ethics and compliance officers to function as ethics administrators and figureheads (Ferrell et al., 2008; Trevino and Nelson, 2007). For example, the global aerospace firm United Technologies, has staffed the organization with over 150 oversight officers to manage the corporate ethics code, a document that has been utilized since 1990 (Hill, 2009). "United Technologies also established an ombudsperson program in 1986 that lets employees to inquire anonymously about ethics issues. The program has received some 56,000 inquiries since 1986, and ombudspeople have handling 8,000 cases" (Hill, 2009, p. 145).

Additionally, organizations need to develop programs that augment an ethical context. In particular, ethics codes are "a primary or salient component of ethical culture," and "…existing evidence supports the idea that an organizational code of conduct reduces the incidence of unethical choices" (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010. p. 7). Previous research indicates that such codes can enhance company ethics (Adams et al., 2001; Valentine & Barnett, 2002) and the ethical decision-making process (Douglas et al., 2001; McCabe et al., 1996). Ethics training can also be used to teach employees important ethical values that shape work behaviors, primarily because ethics training increases organizational ethics (Valentine & Fleischman, 2004) and ethical reasoning (Delaney & Sockell, 1992; Loe & Weeks, 2000) in a manner similar to ethics codes. For example, Texas Instruments, the electronics producer known for its ethical leadership and policies (Ferrell et al, 2008), utilizes an extensive ethics code, booklets, and other training materials such as an "ethics quick test" to teach employees ethics (www.ti.com/corp/docs/company/citizen/ethics/...). TI has also received numerous ethics rewards that recognize the firm for its outstanding corporate social responsibility (http://www.ti.com/corp/docs/company/awardfactsheet.shtml#citizenship).

This study had several noteworthy limitations that should be mentioned. For instance, all information was collected with a self-report questionnaire, which can lead to common method bias. In addition, a convenience sample was utilized in this investigation, and the absence of individuals who did not complete (or were not approached to complete) the survey could have confounded the results with nonresponse bias. The study's design was also cross-sectional in nature, which diminished the interpretation of causal results. While the sample was fairly diverse, the findings should only be generalized to the professional populations represented in the study, limiting external validity. Additionally, some of the focal variables were related to social desirability, which could have biased the findings; however, this concern was mitigated somewhat by controlling for impression management in the hierarchical regression analysis. Finally, only one perceptual measure of ethical context was used, and obtaining a broader, more objective picture of corporate ethics might have yielded different results.

Future research should address these limitations by obtaining information from individuals working in different professions, organizations, and geographic regions. Varying data collection approaches should also be used to reduce the likelihood of common method bias. Further, new studies should use both objective and subjective measures of ethical context to more comprehensively evaluate how the work environment affects employees. Future investigations of the practical connections between corporate ethics and ethical decision making should facilitate more effective ethics management.

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APPENDIX

MEASURES AND ETHICS VIGNETTE

Corporate Ethical Values

1. Managers in my company often engage in behaviors that I consider to be unethical. (R)
2. In order to succeed in my company, it is often necessary to compromise one's ethics. (R)
3. Top management in my company has let it be known in no uncertain terms that unethical behaviors will not be tolerated.
4. If a manager in my company is discovered to have engaged in unethical behavior that results primarily in *personal gain* (rather than corporate gain), he or she will be promptly reprimanded.
5. If a manager in my company is discovered to have engaged in unethical behavior that results primarily in *corporate gain* (rather than personal gain), he or she will be promptly reprimanded.

Ethics Vignette

An organization that needs its employees to travel for work has negotiated a special rate with airline A—a 35% discount between designated cities—and encourages its personnel to use that airline whenever possible. Frank, an employee with the firm, prefers to use airline B because of their frequent flier program (which allows him to earn free personal trips). In some cases, Frank has booked on airline B even though the tickets cost up to $200 more than similar flight on A, just so he could "rack up those frequent flier points."

Recognition of Ethical Issue

Do you believe that this situation involves an ethical issue or problem?

Completely disagree it involves an ethical issue __:__:__:__:__:__ Completely agree it involves an ethical issue.

Ethical Judgment

Next is a set of adjectives that allow you to evaluate the situation described above.

1. Fair __:__:__:__:__:__ Unfair
2. Just __:__:__:__:__:__ Unjust
3. Morally right __:__:__:__:__:__ Not morally right
4. Acceptable to my family __:__:__:__:__:__ Unacceptable to my family

Ethical Intention

How likely is it that you would engage in the employee's actions described in the situation?

1. Likely __:__:__:__:__:__ Unlikely
2. Improbable __:__:__:__:__:__ Probable (R)
3. Possible __:__:__:__:__:__ Impossible
4. Definitely would not __:__:__:__:__:__ Definitely would (R)

(R) = reverse coded